

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to the Office Action dated June 15, 2005, please consider the following remarks.

In the Office Action issued June 15, 2005, claims 7-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter. Claims 1-4 and 6-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, ¶2, as being indefinite. Claims 1, 3-4, 6-7, 11-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. RE37,401 E to Yamashita et al. (Yamashita) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,923,451 to Karstensen (Karstensen). Claims 8-10 and 14-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamashita in view of Karstensen and further in view of Admitted Prior Art (Fig. 1). Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamashita in view of Karstensen and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,842,801 to Kamiguchi et al. (Kamiguchi).

Claims 1-4, 6, and 8-18 are now pending in this application. Claim 1 has been amended in response to the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, ¶2. Claims 7 and 12 have been cancelled and new claims 17 and 18 have been added. New claims 17 and 18 include the subject matter of cancelled claims 7 and 12, respectively, but deal with the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §101. Claims 8, 11, 13, 14 have been amended to depend from claim 17 or 18 rather than claims 7 or 12.

The present invention provides an interface device that is automatically configured depending on how different network units are connected to each other.

Examples of different manners of connecting network units are given in connection with Figs. 4 and 5 in the present application. The present invention thus provides an interface device that is automatically configured, for example, in the two different situations shown in Figs. 4 and 5.

The applicant respectfully submits that the present invention, according to claims 1, 3-4, 6-7, 11-13, is not obvious in view of Yamashita and Karstensen because one of ordinary skill in the art would not be properly motivated to combine the teachings of Yamashita and Karstensen. Yamashita discloses a fault recovery system of a ring network based on a synchronous transport module transmission system, having a fault data writing unit for writing, when an input fault is detected by a node, fault data in a predetermined user byte in an overhead of a frame flowing through both a working line and a protection line running in opposite directions to each other. By detecting the fault data in a supervision node or a node just before the fault position, the supervision node or the node just before the fault position executes a loopback operation.

Karstensen discloses an active electrical-optical rear wall for connection of electronic devices to be brought into communication with one another, in plug-in technology, whereby optoelectronic terminal installations for respective connection of an electronic device are arranged on the rear wall, which installations are connected, by means of unguided beam connections, with optical transmission channels that connect adjacent terminal installations with one

another. Thus, Karstensen shows components 1 (see for example fig. 1) which are optically pluggable to optical contacts 21. In fig. 7 in Yamashita, on the other hand the units are connected to electrical conductors within the unit 7. It would therefore not be possible to use the optical components 1 according to document Karstensen in the system according to Yamashita.

The examiner admits that Yamashita does not disclose pluggable transceivers, but argues that it would be obvious in view of Karstensen to make the transceivers pluggable. Applicant does not agree because nothing in Yamashita or Karstensen discloses or suggests anything that would lead a person of ordinary skill in the art to combine the units 1 and 3 in Fig. 7 (the combination suggested by the Examiner) or indeed, to combine any of the units shown in Fig. 7. Likewise, nothing in Yamashita or Karstensen discloses or suggests anything that would lead a person of ordinary skill in the art to make the units pluggable. Thus, there is no disclosure or suggestion in Yamashita or Karstensen that properly motivate one of ordinary skill in the art to combine their teachings.

The applicant further respectfully submits that the present invention, according to claims 1, 3-4, 6-7, 11-13, is not obvious in view of Yamashita and Karstensen because even if Yamashita and Karstensen were combined as suggested by the Examiner, the result would not be the present invention as claimed. The device disclosed by Yamashita has a completely different purpose than the present invention. Yamashita does not disclose or suggest different

manners of connecting different network units. Rather, Yamashita discloses an application with a "working line" and a "protecting line" that run in parallel.

By contrast, the present invention, for example, according to claim 1, requires a controller arranged to automatically control the switching unit in response to at least one control signal such that said first state is selected when said at least one control signal indicates either that no transceiver module is attached to said second receiving section or that no optical signal above a certain signal level is received by a transceiver module attached to said second receiving section. Thus, the present invention controls the switching unit based on whether a transceiver module is attached, while Yamashita discloses a device in which the receivers and transmitters are permanently attached to the device. Thus, it is not even possible to have a switching criterion (like in the present invention) that no transceiver module is connected, since this switching criterion is of course applicable only if pluggable transceivers are used (since permanently connected "transceivers" are always connected). Karstensen likewise does not disclose or suggest such a switching criterion, thus, the combination of Yamashita and Karstensen still fails to disclose this required element of the present invention.

The examiner refers to fig. 7 and 8 in Yamashita. The examiner here interprets the units 1, 12, 13 and 3, 31, 32 in fig. 7 as if these units together correspond to the first transceiver module in, for example, claim 1 of the present application. Analogously, the examiner interprets the units 2 etc. and 4 etc. in fig.

7 in Yamashita as if these units together correspond to the second transceiver module according to the present invention. Thus, the examiner interprets element 1 as the first receiving section. However, according to the present invention, for example, according to claim 1, the first receiving section is arranged for receiving a first transceiver module (i.e. both a first receiver unit and a first transmitter unit). The examiner interprets the element 3 etc. in fig. 7 as the first transmitter unit. However, the element 1 is not adapted to receive the element 3 etc. in fig. 7. Consequently, Yamashita does not disclose this required element of the present invention. Karstensen likewise does not disclose or suggest such a an arrangement, thus, the combination of Yamashita and Karstensen still fails to disclose this required element of the present invention.

Further, even if the units 1 and 3 were combined to form a transceiver module as suggested by the examiner, this would still not disclose or suggest the present invention as claimed. For example, claim 1 recites a switching unit for switching said electric circuit arrangement between at least a first and a second state, wherein, in the first state the electrical signals from the first receiver unit are conducted to said first transmitter unit and in said second state the electrical signals from said second receiver unit are conducted to said first transmitter unit, and a controller arranged to automatically control the switching unit in response to at least one control signal such that said first state is selected when said at least one control signal

indicates either that no transceiver module is attached to said second receiving section or that no optical signal above a certain signal level is received by a transceiver module attached to said second receiving section.

Thus, according to the present invention it is the case that in the second state the signal from the receiver of the first transceiver goes to the transmitter of the second transceiver. However, according to the present invention, if the controller indicates that no transceiver module is attached to the second receiving section (or that no optical signal above a certain signal level is received by a transceiver module attached to the second receiving section) then the switching unit automatically selects the first state mentioned in the claims. This feature is not provided by the device disclosed by Yamashita. According to Yamashita, the opposite is the case, i.e. the signal is normally conducted from the unit 1 (i.e. the first receiver according to the examiner) directly to the unit 3 (i.e. the first transmitter according to the examiner). It appears that this is the case independently of if there is an input signal in the unit 4 or not. Consequently, Yamashita does not disclose or suggest that the switching unit is set to a state corresponding to the first state in, for example, claim 1, if no signal is received in the unit 4 in fig. 7 in Yamashita (this follows from the description of how the device according to Yamashita works; see in particular column 7, line 47 to column 9, line 5 in Yamashita.)

Therefore, the present invention according to claim 1, and according to claims 17 and 18, which are similar to claim 1, and according to claims, 3-4, 6, 11, and 13, which depend therefrom, is not obvious in view of the combination of Yamashita and Karstensen.

The applicant respectfully submits that the present invention according to claims 8-10 and 14-16 is not obvious over Yamashita in view of Karstensen and further in view of Fig. 1 of the present application. Fig 1 shows an example of a part of a fiberoptic communication network according to the prior art. The figure shows a subscriber or client unit 12 connected to a larger fiberoptic network 14 via an interface 10 and a multiplexer/demultiplexer 11. Fig. 1 of the present application does not disclose the claimed features of the present invention, for example, according to claims 17 and 18, described above. Thus, even if the combination of Yamashita, Karstensen, and Fig. 1 of the present application suggested by the Examiner were made, this combination still would not disclose or suggest all required elements of the present invention.

Therefore, the present invention, according to claims 8-10 and 14-16, which depend from claims 17 and 18, is not obvious over Yamashita in view of Karstensen and further in view of Fig. 1 of the present application.

The applicant respectfully submits that the present invention according to claim 2 is not obvious over Yamashita in view of Karstensen and further in view of Kamiguchi. Kamiguchi discloses a switching control method that can smoothly

affect transfer from a pressure holding step to a metering and kneading step in an injection-molding machine employing a servomotor as an injection shaft driving source for axially driving a screw. Kamiguchi appears to bear no relation to the technical field of the present invention. In addition, as discussed above, Kamiguchi does not disclose or suggest the requirement of the present invention, according to claim 1, from which claim 2 depends, of first and second receiving sections that are designed such that the first and second transceiver modules may be plugged into the receiving sections and unplugged therefrom in a quick-connect manner. Thus, the even if the combination of Yamashita, Karstensen, and Kamiguchi suggested by the Examiner were made, the combination of Yamashita, Karstensen, and Kamiguchi still would not disclose or suggest this required element of the present invention.

Therefore, the present invention, according to claim 2, is not obvious over Yamashita in view of Karstensen and further in view of Kamiguchi.

Each of the claims now pending in this application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration of this case and early issuance of the Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested.

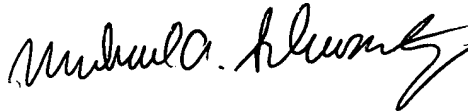
Additional Fees:

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any insufficient fees or credit any overpayment associated with this application to Deposit Account No. 19-5127 (19378.0018).

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, all of the Examiner's rejections to the claims are believed to be overcome. The Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and issuance of a Notice of Allowance for all the claims remaining in the application. Should the Examiner feel further communication would facilitate prosecution, he is urged to call the undersigned at the phone number provided below.

Respectfully Submitted,



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